

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 07620 221431Z

53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 ACDA-07

/084 W

----- 009096

O R 221330Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1854

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 7620

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, LE

SUBJECT: SARKIS INAUGURATION TO BE AT CHTAURA

REF: BEIRUT 7592

1. SUMMARY. PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE HAS
ANNOUNCED SESSION FOR SARKIS' INAUGURATION TO TAKE PLACE IN
CHTAURA BEGINNING AT 1200 NOON SEP 23. DECISION COMPELLED
BY FAILURE OF EFFORTS TO ARRANGE SECURITY AT MUSEUM ON
BEIRUT CONFRONTATION LINE. SOME OBJECTIONS HAVE BEEN MADE
ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL GROUNDS, BUT DECISION
APPEARS TO ENJOY GENERAL SUPPORT, AND SEVERAL SOURCES
REPORT THAT BETWEEN 60-70 DEPUTIES WILL ATTEND. CHAMOUN
WILL PLAY PROMINENT ROLE. SARKIS INAUGURATION SPEECH WILL
BE FIRST CLEAR READING OF HIS VIEW ON HOW TO SOLVE LEBANESE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 07620 221431Z

CONFLICT. END SUMMARY.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT MADE. AFTER MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE SEP 21, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE KAMEL EL-ASSAD ANNOUNCED DECISION TO HOLD PARLIAMENTARY SESSION FOR SWEARING-IN OF PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS AT PARK HOTEL, CHTAURA, AT 1200 NOON SEP 23. EL-ASSAD SAID DECISION CONFORMED TO WILL OF MOST DEPUTIES. HE SAID HE EXPECTED 65-70 DEPUTIES TO ATTEND, BUT EVEN IN ABSENCE OF QUORUM SARKIS WILL BE SWORN IN, IF NECESSARY BEFORE ONLY THE PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE.

3. MUSEUM UNSAFE. DECISION WAS TAKEN AFTER FAILURE OF EFFORTS, PRINCIPALLY BY ARAB LEAGUE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE, TO ARRANGE SECURE MEETING AT MUSEUM ON BEIRUT CONFRONTATION LINE. SARKIS HIMSELF, ACCORDING TO DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE MUNIR ABOU FADEL, WOULD HAVE PREFERRED MUSEUM, AL MUHARRIR REPORTS THAT SARKIS PERSONALLY CONTACTED ELEMENTS OF JUNBLATT'S CAMP AND TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO CONTACT PLO LEADER ABU IYAD TO EXPLAIN IMPOSSIBILITY OF A MEETING AT MUSEUM.

4. CRITICS. CHTAURA SESSION HAS MET WITH SOME OPPOSITION. DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE MUNIR ABU FADEL STATED FLATLY THAT SESSION WOULD BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND THAT VIEWS OF FRENCH CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERT VEDEL (REFTEL) ARE NOT UNCONTESTED. ABU FADEL SAID HE BELIEVES SOME 42 DEPUTIES WOULD NOT ATTEND SESSION. KAMAL JUNBLATT'S POLITICAL COUNCIL ISSUED STATEMENT CLAIMING THAT ONLY PARLIAMENT ITSELF COULD UNDERTAKE DECISION TO MEET OUTSIDE BEIRUT, BUT JUNBLATT HIMSELF IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT HE WOULD ATTEND CHTAURA MEETING IF HE WERE ASSURED OF SUFFICIENT PROTECTION AND IF SYRIAN TROOPS WITHDREW FROM THE AREA. RAYMOND EDDE SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO POSTPONE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION RATHER THAN HOLD IT OUTSIDE BEIRUT, AND THAT SARKIS COULD ASSUME OFFICE PRIOR TO TAKING OATH. EDDE'S NATIONAL UNITY FRONT IS MEETING SEP 22 TO TAKE FORMAL POSITION.

5. SCENARIO. SARKIS IS EXPECTED TO GO TO CITY HALL OF ZOUK MIKAEL AT 1000, SEP 23, FOR CEREMONIAL TRANSFER CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 07620 221431Z

OF POWER OF OFFICE. PRESENT WILL BE FRANGIE, PAST PRESIDENTS CHAMOUN AND HELOU, APOSTOLIC NUNCIO MONSIGNOR BRUNIERA (AS HEAD OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS), AND CABINET MINISTERS. HE WILL THEN TAKE SYRIAN MILITARY HELICOPTER TO RAYAK AIR BASE IN THE BEKAA AND DRIVE TO CHTAURA. SYRIANS HAVE OFFERED TO PROVIDE HELICOPTER TRANSPORT FOR DEPUTIES AS WELL. SARKIS WILL MAKE ADDRESS AFTER TAKING OATH, WHICH OBSERVERS EXPECT WILL

FOCUS ON ASPECTS OF LEBANESE-LEBANESE RECONCILIATION.
IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHETHER SARKIS WILL RETURN TO
BEIRUT SAME DAY OR POSSIBLY STAY OVERNIGHT IN CHTAURA
FOR SEP 24 PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN-LEBANESE MEETING, WHICH
IS STILL EXPECTED. IT IS ALSO UNCLEAR WHERE SARKIS
WILL TAKE UP RESIDENCE. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AT BAABDA
HAS BEEN UNDERGOING REPAIR WORK FOR LAST TWO WEEKS IN
ANTICIPATION OF HIS ARRIVAL, BUT AREA IS STILL UNDER
SPORADIC ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE.

6. COMMENT. IT APPEARS THAT CHAMOUN, WHATEVER HE MAY
HAVE CONTEMPLATED LAST WEEK, HAS NOW AGREED TO
PARTICIPATE IN SARKIS' INAUGURATION, AND WILL HIMSELF
PLAY AS PROMINENT A ROLE AS POSSIBLE IN PROCEEDINGS.
DESPITE SOME GRUMBLING, IT APPEARS THAT GREAT MAJORITY
OF LEBANESE POLITICAL VOICES ARE AGREEABLE TO CHTAURA
SESSION. EVEN JUNBLATT, WHILE OBJECTING, HAS
APPARENTLY NOT CLAIMED SCENARIO IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL.
SARKIS' INAUGURATION SPEECH WILL BE FIRST INDICATION BY
THIS REMARKABLY SILENT MAN OF HIS PERSPECTIVES ON
LEBANESE CONFLICT AND HOW HE MIGHT GO ABOUT TRYING TO
RESOLVE IT.

LANE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT ELECT, ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT07620
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760357-1112
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760934/aaaabcty.tel
Line Count: 138
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BEIRUT 7592
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <22 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SARKIS INAUGURATION TO BE AT CHTAURA
TAGS: PINT, LE, (SARKIS, ELIAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006